

Institute for Korean Studies Speaker Series



DAVID KANG

The U.S. Pivot and Regional Security in Northeast Asia

Friday, November 04, 2016, 12:00PM - 1:15PM

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Avenue, Room 120
Columbus, Ohio 43201

[View a recording of this event](#)

[Register here for this event](#)

This event is sponsored in part by a grant from the Korea Foundation and the Northeast Asia Council of the Association of Asian Studies and a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant to The Ohio State University East Asian Studies Center

David C. Kang is professor of international relations and business at the University of Southern California, with appointments in both the School of International Relations and Marshall School of Business. He is also director of USC Korean Studies Institute and director of the USC Center for International Studies. Previously he was a professor at Dartmouth College's Government Department and Tuck School of Business (1996-2009).



David Kang
Professor of International
Relations and Business
University of Southern
California

Kang's latest book is *East Asia Before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute* (Columbia University Press, 2010). He is also author of *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (Columbia University Press, 2007), *Crony Capitalism: Corruption and Development in South Korea and the Philippines* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), and *Nuclear North Korea: A Debate on Engagement Strategies*, with Victor Cha (Columbia University Press, 2003). An article about David Kang and Victor Cha can be found in *KoreAm* magazine, "A Brilliant Rivalry: Victor Cha and David Kang."

Kang has published numerous scholarly articles in journals such as *International Organization* and *International Security*, and his co-authored article "Testing Balance of Power Theory in World History" was awarded Best Article, 2007-2009, by the *European Journal of International Relations*. Kang has also written opinion pieces in *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*, as well as writing a monthly column for the *JoongAng Ilbo* in Korean. He received a bachelor's with honors from Stanford University and a doctorate from Berkeley.

Abstract

For over a quarter century, there have been dire and continued predictions that East Asia is experiencing an arms race, that the regional security dilemma is intensifying, and that dangerous instability driven by China is just around the corner. Yet in reality, over the past twenty-five years, the proportion of the economy devoted to defense spending in East Asia has steadily declined.

Is East Asia actually more peaceful than the conventional wisdom might suggest? If so, why? I argue that there is little evidence that East Asian states are engaged in an arms race, that few states are sending costly signals about their resolve to suffer the costs of war, that there is indeed almost no evidence that states in the region are preparing for war, and that the region is more peaceful, stable, and prosperous now than at anytime in the past century. If the region is more stable than popularly believed, then the U.S. pivot to East Asia should remain focused on diplomatic and economic initiatives and not get sidetracked with military issues.